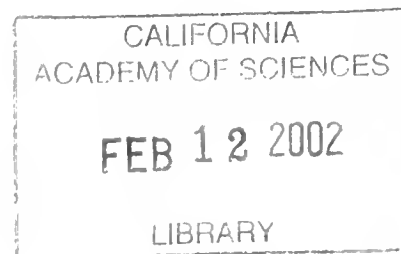
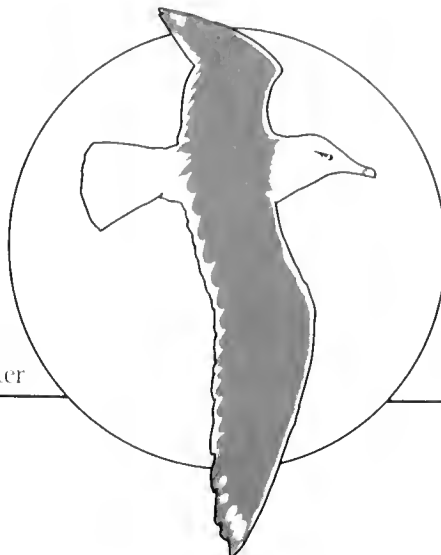


The Gull

Golden Gate Audubon Society Newsletter



Volume 86 No. 2 February 2002

GGAS is Sued and Then Vindicated

By Arthur Feinstein

One of the most nefarious of recent trends in the courts has been that in which people opposed to the environmental movement sue environmentalists on baseless charges simply in order to scare off the environmentalists or to exhaust their coffers on legal fees. These are called SLAPP suits. GGAS was recently the subject of just such a lawsuit.

For several years now we have joined with many other organizations (Sierra Club, Wilderness Society, Pacific Coast Federation of Fisheries Associations, Klamath Forest Alliance, local Native American tribes and others) defending the four Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuges (Upper Klamath NWR, Lower Klamath NWR, Tule Lake NWR, Clear Lake NWR) and the fisheries of the Klamath River.

These Refuges support the largest number of migratory waterfowl on the entire West Coast of North America (over one million birds present during the peak of migration in 1995 at the Lower Klamath NWR alone). Our Bay Area ducks and geese depend on the Klamath Refuges for their survival on their migratory journey.

The largest concentration of Bald Eagles in the lower 48 States gathers here every winter (the Klamath Bald Eagle festival is famous).

Klamath Lake also provides habitat for a rare suckerfish that was once the major source of food for local Indian tribes and is now listed under the federal Endangered Species Act. The Klamath River itself is habitat for the Coho salmon and for Steelhead; both federally listed as "threatened" species.

At issue here is the lack of water for the Refuges and the River. The Lower Klamath National Wildlife Refuge, established by Teddy Roosevelt in

1908, was the first National Wildlife Refuge ever created. The Tule Lake NWR was established in 1928 and the other Refuges followed. In the 1950's the US government's Bureau of Reclamation (BR) created dams and an irrigation system in the high desert Klamath Basin and invited farmers to come and build homes and grow crops. Many of the farms were established on National Wildlife Refuge land through leases to the farmers. It was not the most clever move our government ever made.

As farming and the human population increased we have witnessed an increasing competition for that rare commodity, water. The Klamath Basin is, after all, a high desert area. Although there is a long record of legislation and Presidential Executive Orders recognizing that the primary purpose of the Refuges is to provide habitat for wildlife and waterfowl, the BR has tended to provide more water to farmers than to wildlife. Over the last twenty or so years this water management regime has resulted in significant impacts to the Refuges' ability to support waterfowl and has significantly effected the fish species.

Lately, there has been a drought in the Klamath Basin and the BR (which operates the dams and regulates the flow of water in the system) has consistently failed to provide adequate water to the Refuges and to the River itself. Instead, the BR has provided the water to the local farmers. The result is a significant decline in fish populations (sucker and salmon) and inadequate water for waterfowl leading to a decline in their numbers. The decline in the fish population can effect the Klamath Basin Bald Eagle population because the Eagles depend

Continues on page 2

Front cover...

Continued from page 1

on the fish for food.

We have long sought a solution to this problem. The BR, however, has failed to respond to our letters requesting more water for the Refuges and River. Ultimately we were forced to join with our many other environmental partners and sue the BR.

We have won some and lost some of these lawsuits and we continue to seek answers to this difficult problem. One potential solution is to buy out some of the farmers, return that land

to wetlands or other habitat and thus reduce the competition for river water. Recently there has been talk of legislation for this purpose.

Some farmers are very willing to see this take place. Others are very resistant to the idea. Last year we were sued in a SLAPP suit by a Klamath resident who charged us with conspiring to portray the Klamath Coho salmon as "threatened" under the federal Endangered Species Act. Since the U.S. government, itself, had classified the salmon as "threatened" the suit clearly had no validity. Nonetheless, it is always scary to be brought to court. Happily,

lawyer *extraordinaire*, Phil Berry, who is familiar with this type of SLAPP litigation, agreed to represent the Sierra Club and all other environmental defendants, including GGAS. In late December the plaintiff finally withdrew the complaint. We were completely exonerated!

It was our first SLAPP suit. It wasn't much fun. But when they start suing you as conservationists, maybe that's when you know you are doing something right.

Let us hope that the Klamath issue can be as favorably resolved as was our SLAPP suit.

Vote For Proposition 40

Save California's Threatened Wildlife The California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Act of 2002

California contains one of the most biologically rich landscapes in the world. With more than 800 animal species and more than 5,000 plant species, California contains a dizzying array of diverse species. However, California's multitude of ecosystems is being seriously strained by rapid growth and resource consumption. Already, California has lost 91% of its wetlands. Ninety percent of our state's valley and blue oak trees have been destroyed. And, agricultural lands are projected to decline by 25% in the next century. As a result, California has more species listed as threatened or endangered than any state except Hawaii.

The threats to California's plant and wildlife diversity are increasing instead of declining. By 2025, California's population is expected to grow from 35 million to 50 million. With more development to accommodate our increasing population, habitat essential for the continued existence of species such as the burrowing owl, mountain lion, and white-tailed kite will become increas-

ingly fragmented and smaller in size, making it more difficult to keep these species off the endangered species list.

How the 2002 Park Bond Protects Wildlife:

With so many species and so many different kinds of habitat to protect, the challenge of saving California's biodiversity is enormous. Following in the footsteps of Proposition 12, the 2002 Park Bond takes another critical step in the effort to protect important species and the places in which they live by providing \$1.275 billion for land, air and water conservation, and \$225 million to the State Parks.

The 2002 Park Bond would protect California's wildlife by providing:

\$300 million to the Wildlife Conservation Board for the acquisition, development, restoration, and rehabilitation of habitat that promotes the recovery of threatened and endangered species.

\$445 million to be divided among eight conservancies for land acquisition as well, with the focus on land and water resources.

\$75 million to be acquired for preservation of agricultural lands, including oak woodlands and grasslands.

\$20 million for the California Conservation Corps for acquisition, development, restoration, and rehabilitation of land and water resources.

\$225 million for State Parks which benefit wildlife by providing public education and quality habitat. Up to half of the funds can be used for land acquisition.

\$375 million for protection of water resources which would benefit wildlife that live in wetlands and those that live in the delicate riparian zone along rivers.

For GGAS members, this bond measure is particularly important. The Bay will get a lot of money from this measure (for example \$40 million for the SF Bay Conservancy Fund which specifically funds SF Bay acquisition and restoration projects). This will allow us to acquire threatened wetlands and to restore the Bay to health. Please Vote For Prop 40!

GGAS East Bay Members Please Vote Yes on Proposition K

The East Bay Regional Park District has over 90,000 acres of land to manage and desperately needs added funds to manage it properly. Even though we ask them to maintain much of the land as natural areas, that still requires a lot of management. They need to control exotic vegetation and other exotic

species that threaten our native wildlife. They need to maintain the trails we use to enjoy the natural areas. We have asked them to restore native grasses on much of their land. This will provide essential habitat for many of our native bird species, but this too takes a lot of effort money. Please Vote Yes on Proposition K, it

adds very little to your yearly budget but it will make all the difference to our wildlife and our enjoyment of that wildlife.

Please Vote Yes on Prop K. Thanks

Member Profiles GGAS Board President Leslie Lethridge

By Marjorie Blackwell

GGAS Board President Leslie Lethridge has traveled the world on GGAS-organized trips, but she believes the chapter also has an important mission right here at home.

"I believe we should continue to increase our efforts to reach low-income and minority communities," she says. "We need to strengthen our profile to attract more members from these communities.

"I'm very proud of the classes we offer to young students in East Oakland and Alameda through our urban environmental education classes focusing on the Martin Luther King, Jr. Shoreline Park and the Alameda Wildlife Refuge," she says. "Arrowhead Marsh is practically in their back yard, but many of the children in these communities have never been there and do not know anything about birds or other wildlife, especially right in their own area. Thanks to the GGAS classroom and outdoor programs, we are opening the door for them to discover what's there.

"Arrowhead is a wonderful place," she adds. "It's so accessible and so visible from the road that it draws

people to stop and investigate. I saw my first Clapper Rail there."

Leslie has been a GGAS member for more than 15 years and a board member for nearly that long. She became interested in Audubon through "a friend of a friend," and was recruited to serve as recording secretary. She has been an active member ever since and now offers her knowledge of chapter history as a resource. As Board president, she says chapter business is constantly on her mind, and she stays in close communication with staff and fellow board members through e-mail.

"I am extremely lucky to work with such incredibly hard-working and talented staff and board members," she says. "I rely on them constantly. They make the President's job almost easy."

Although she claims not to be an expert birder, Leslie enjoys birding "whenever the opportunity arises," and her extensive travels have provided some rare opportunities. In addition to GGAS trips to Kenya, Ecuador and Panama, she has traveled to Ghana and New Zealand as a volunteer home-builder with Habitat For Humanity. In New Zealand, after

helping to build two houses, she backpacked the length of the Milford Track and, despite pouring rain, saw a Kea, a very large bird known to eat windshield wipers.

Back home, Leslie works full time as a court investigator for Alameda County Superior Court. Reporting to the probate judge, she investigates conservatorships and guardianships. The work entails monitoring and following up on whether conservators and guardians are carrying out their legal responsibilities. Conservators, she explains, are appointed over adults who are unable to make decisions for themselves due to age, mental illness or some other disability, while guardians take the place of parents who cannot act on behalf of their children.

Leslie, of Japanese-American heritage and a native of Berkeley, has lived in the Bay Area her entire life. She attended the University of California, Berkeley and earned her degree from Mills College. She is the parent of two adult children; her daughter Nikki is a development assistant, and her son Moose is a musician.



November 28–December 27, 2001

This month, Collin Murphy steps down as writer of this column, and I do my best to take up the reins. We all owe Collin a great deal of gratitude for the countless hours she has spent over the past 4 years producing this column. Under her able authorship, it has provided for our reading enjoyment while serving as an important archive of significant avian records for northern California. She leaves large shoes to fill.

Our region saw a rainy December. Above-average precipitation wetted more than a few Christmas Counts, and two stormy periods brought seabirds in from offshore. Unfortunately, so did oil. An oil spill of unknown origin killed hundreds of Common Murres and other seabirds along the coast from Pt. Reyes to Monterey. As of this writing, over 700 dead birds have been recovered, and nearly 200 are being cleaned and released, while the spill's cause is still unknown and the problem is ongoing. Otherwise, the period was notable for its 11 CBRC review species and for a surprising influx of Barn Swallows, a species that normally winters from southern Mexico to Tierra del Fuego.

Loons to Ducks

An **Arctic Loon** (*Gavia arctica*) was reported from Patrick's Point SP, HUM, Nov. 30 (KI), and another was recorded off North Beach, PRNS, MRN, Dec. 15 (DD, oob; MEz). Two **Yellow-billed Loons** (*Gavia adamsii*) were also reported, the first on Nov. 29 off Otter Point, Pacific Grove, MTY (a location the species has been seen in the past; MBRBA), and the second a "probable" bird seen from Manila Community Park, Arcata, HUM, Dec. 15 (NWCRA). Single Red-necked Grebes occurred inland off Hwy 20 in LAK, Dec. 2 (JWh), and at Shoreline L., SCL, throughout the period (MR; mob), while 2 were seen

at Whiskeytown L., SHA, Nov. 30 (RM, NM, JCo, BD; WO). Reports came from expected coastal sites south to the Carmel R. mouth, MTY, Dec. 15. (JW).

Point Arena Cove's (MEN) Laysan Albatross returned for yet another winter. First noted Dec. 4, locals said the bird arrived ~10 days earlier (DT). A Laysan was also noted on the Dec. 17 Monterey Bay CBC, along with 6 Black-footed Albatrosses. One Black-footed was reported offshore from Fairhaven, HUM, Dec. 15 (Arcata CBC). A seawatch in stormy weather at MacKerricher SP, MEN, Dec. 2, produced 2 Pink-footed Shearwaters, 1 Buller's Shearwater, over 300 Sooty Shearwaters, and at least 2 Short-tailed Shearwaters (MMA). The Monterey Bay CBC recorded 11 Pink-footeds, 6 Sooties, 9 Short-taileds, and 3 Sooty/Short-tailed species. Unidentified dark shearwaters were also observed from the Bird Rock area, MTY, Nov. 28 (DR) and Manresa SB, SCZ, Dec. 21 (DS). Highlighting the tubenoses this period was a **Manx Shearwater** (*Puffinus puffinus*) seen on the Dec. 17 Monterey Bay CBC. Single Black-vented Shearwaters were off Sutro Baths, SF, Dec. 14 (ASH), and on the Monterey Bay CBC, while 7 sheared past Manresa SB, SCZ, Dec. 21 (DS).

Brown Pelicans strayed inland to make CBC appearances at Los Vaqueros Res., CC, Dec. 22 (DW) and Eight Mile Rd in Stockton, SJ, Dec. 15 (CPi), where one had occurred last summer. In the notable behavior department, a Great Blue Heron was seen eating a Belted Kingfisher near Eureka, HUM, Dec. 10 (GL). The L. Merritt, ALA, Cattle Egret remained a fixture all period; also seen were 4 on Guard Road, SJ, Dec. 3 (RP), and 3 in Arcata (HUM), Dec. 6–7 (JT).

Twenty-one Greater White-fronted Geese were reported from 6 coastal counties. An **Emperor Goose** (*Chen canagica*) was found on Bodega Bay

Dec. 23 (DD) and seen by various observers through at least the 27th. Six coastal counties hosted 19 Snow Geese in 9 locations and 19 Ross's Geese in 11 locations. Two "Cackling" Canada Geese appeared near the Moon Glow Dairy, MTY, Dec. 27 (BG), and singles were at Crissy Field, SF, in late Nov. (ASH), and Lanphere Bridge, HUM, Dec. 6 (JT). Three "Aleutian" Canada Geese were at Lanphere Bridge the same day (JT), while one at Calero Res., SCL, appeared injured and may have been present since Nov 3 (JMa, MM). Tundra Swans were reported from 6 locations in MEN, MTY, SBT, and SCL, totalling 36 birds, and 223 were counted off Hwy 680 in SOL (NBB). On Dec. 19 an adult **Whooper Swan** (*Cygnus cygnus*) was found on L. Almanor at the mouth of Bailey Creek, PLU, in the company of 100 Tundra Swans (CB).

In total, 134 Wood Ducks were reported from 10 locations in 7 counties, including highs of 60 at Almaden Res., SCL, Dec. 1 (AV) and 39 at PRNS, MRN, Dec. 19 (JW). Eurasian Wigeons numbered 18 from 12 locations in 6 counties. At least 41 Blue-winged Teal were seen in 10 locations in 7 counties, and a Eurasian Green-winged ("Common") Teal was found Dec. 23 n. of Ferndale Sewage Ponds, HUM (MW). Canvasbacks numbered 9,500 at the Upper Beach L. wetlands, Bufferlands, SAC, Dec. 7, the greatest concentration in 4 years (CC). Tufted Ducks were noted at Redwood Shores, SM, Nov. 30 (2 females; RSTh; AW); Sunnyvale Water Pollution Control Plant pond, SCL, Dec. 5 (MR); Westlake Park, Santa Cruz, Dec. 15–24 (KA; mob); and Zmudowski SB, MTY, Dec. 22 (NM). Harlequin Ducks numbered 20 at their stronghold at Glass Beach, Fort Bragg, MEN, Nov. 30 (DT), while elsewhere singles showed up near King Salmon, HUM, Dec. 2 (GB); North Jetty, HUM, Dec. 24 (MW); and Manresa SB, SCZ, Dec. 21 (DS). One male Harlequin at Chimney

Wood Warbler Sightings

Tennessee Warbler

Dec. 9, 27 L. Merced, SF SD, LC
(continued from Nov. 25)

Dec. 13 Lighthouse Field DS
SB, SCZ
Dec. 15 Miramar, SM RSTh
Dec. 15 Coffee Lane Park, CK
SCZ

Nashville Warbler

Nov. 30 Thurwachter DR
Bridge, MTY
Dec. 3 Natural Bridges AK
SB, SCZ
Dec. 3 Zehdner Ave., GB
Arcata, HUM
Dec. 5 Hudson Rd, SCZ DS
Dec. 11 Bayview St, JT
Arcata, HUM
Dec. 11-15 Caledonia Park, BW; RE, SR
Pacific Grove, MTY
Dec. 11-15 Branciforte Dip, LG, JP, BM;
SCZ TN
Dec. 15 Coffee Lane Park, CK
SCZ
Dec. 15 Porter Gulch Rd, DS
SCZ
Dec. 15 Princeton, SM CSCBC
Dec. 16 Crescent City, DN RH
Dec. 16 L. Merced ME, SD,
HC
Dec. 19-26 St. Joseph's DS
Church, Capitola,
SCZ
Dec. 27 Presidio, SF RS

Lucy's Warbler

Dec. 16-17 Caledonia Park, DP, JW,
Pacific Grove, MTY NS, SM

Northern Parula

Nov. 30 Cosumnes River JTr
(continued) Preserve, SAC

Black-throated Blue Warbler

Nov. 28- Chrystal Terr., MS; TN
Dec. 22 Santa Cruz & mob
Dec. 7-11 Chestnut & Walnut KA
Sts, Santa Cruz

~Dec. 7 Half Moon Bay, SM RSTh

Palm Warbler

Nov. 29- Moon Glow LG, BM;
Dec. 27 Dairy, MTY MD, KH,
(continued) BG

Dec. 2, 7 Bercut, GGP, SF RF; ME
(continued)

Dec. 6 Moxon Rd, Arcata, JT
HUM

Dec. 11-19 Allen Marsh, JT
Arcata, HUM

Dec. 15 Soquel High DS
School, SCZ

Dec. 15 Sea Cloud Park, CSCBC
Foster City, SM

Dec. 16 Crescent City, DN RH

Black-and-white Warbler

Nov. 26 Cosumnes River PPa
Preserve, SAC

Nov. 29 Andrew Molera JS
SP, MTY

Dec. 9-15 Soquel Creek, DS, CE
SCZ

Dec. 15 Miramontes/ CSCBC
Ocean Colony, SM

Dec. 25 Corralitos Creek, DS
SCZ

Dec. 25 Pinehurst La., GD
Half Moon Bay, SM

American Redstart

Dec. 15, 27 Soquel Creek, SCZ CE; DS

Northern Waterthrush

Dec. 15 San Francisco FT
watershed, SM

MacGillivray's Warbler

Nov. 30 Rodman Slough, GL
LAK

Dec. 8 Matadero Creek, DS
Palo Alto, SCL

Abbreviations for Observers: DA, Dick Ashford; KA, Kumaram Arul; SA, Stephanie Author; SAb, Steve Abbott; AB, Alan Barron; BB, Bill Bousman; BBa, Bruce Barrett; CB, Collin Billingham; DB, Diane Bravis; GB, Gary Bloomfield; GBa, Gina Barton; JB, Joelle Buffa; LB, Len Bluman; MB, Mel Bolinder; SB, Sara Blauman; TB, Tim Behr; AC, Alex Cruz; CC, Chris Conard; GC, Ginny Campbell; HC, Hugh Cotter; JC, Josiah Clark; JCo, John Coon; KC, Keith Chamberlain; LC, Luke Cole; LCh, Les Chibana; RC, Rita Carratello; RCo, Rob Colson; AD, Al DeMartini; BD, Bruce Deuel; DD, Dave DeSante; GD, Gary Deghi; MD, Matthew Dodder; RD, Ryan DiGaudio; SD, Stephen Davies; AE, Al Eisner; BE, Bruce

Elliot; CL, Chris Emmons; ME, Mark Eaton; MEZ, Mike Ezekiel; TE, Todd Easterla; HLL, Ted Elliot; DE, Dave Feliz; DH, Dave Froba; H, Eric Fess; H, Feather Forestwalker; MI, Mike Feighner; RI, Rob Fowler; BG, Bruce Gerow; JG, Jim Gann; LG, Lois Goldfrank; SG, Steve Glover; SGe, Steve Gerow; ASH, Alan S. Hopkins; CH, Cheryl Heineken; GH, Geoff Heineken; GHh, George Hiddenburg; JH, Janet Harrison; JHu, John Hunter; KH, Kelly Hayashi; RH, Rob Hewitt; RHh, Rick Heiser; SH, Sherry Hudson; JH, Tonya Hall; KI, Ken Irwin; AJ, Alvaro Jaramillo; AK, Anna Kopitov; CK, Clay Kempf; JK, Jon King; BL, Barry Lyon; GL, Gary Lester; JL, John Luther; JLe, John Lewis; RL, Robin Leong; RLd, Roger Lau; RLB, Rick LeBadour; BNL, Barry McLaughlin; DM, Debra Maier; GM, Gary Matthews; JM, John Meyer; JMa, John Mariani; HM, Herb McGuen; KM, Kevin McKereghan; KMi, Kurt Mize; MM, Mike Mammoser; MMA, Matthew Matthiessen; MMc, Maria Meyer; MMo, Michael Morris; MMr, Mark Morrisette; NM, Nancy Modeen; NMc, Nancy McMahon; RM, Red Modeen; SM, Susan Mastia; TM, Tim Manolis; TMc, Tristan McKee; MN, Mich Ninokata; TN, Todd Newberry; CO, Chet Ogan; WO, William Oliver; CP, Celeste Pryor; CPi, Cheri Pillsbury; DP, Dennis Paulson; EP, Eric Preston; JP, Jeff Poklen; JPo, Jude Power; MP, Mike Parmeter; PP, Peter Pyle; PPa, Pat Paternoster; RP, Rich Petersen; AR, Allan Ridley; BR, Bob Reiling; GR, Gary Rosenberg; MR, Mike Rogers; SR, Steve Rovell; SRu, Siobhan Ruck; BS, Barry Stacey; DS, David Suddjian; DSt, Dick Stovel; GSC, George St. Clair; JMS, Jean-Marie Spoelman; JS, Jason Scott; LS, Larry Siemens; MS, Madeline Spencer; NS, Netta Smith; PS, Paul Saraceni; PSp, Paul Springer; RS, Rich Stallcup; VSY, Vicky Silvas-Young; DT, Dorothy Tobkin; FT, Francis Toldi; JI, Jim Tietz; JTr, John Trochet; RSTh, Ron S. Thorn; AV, Ann Verdi; AW, Adam Winer; AWx, Anna Wilcox; BW, Brian Weed; BW, Bruce Webb; DW, David Wimpfheimer; JW, Jay Withgott; JWWh, Jerry White; JiWh, Jim White; LW, Liz West; MW, Matt Wachs; NW, Natalie White; RW, Roger Wolfe; DY, David Yee. Semicolons separate original observer(s) from subsequent observer(s). Abbreviation "mob" = many observers; "oob" = other observers. All information is compiled from rare bird alert transcripts and regional listservs; the author apologizes for any errors or omissions.

Abbreviations for Counties and Others: ALA, Alameda; CBC, Christmas Bird Count; CBRC, California Bird Records Committee; CC, Contra Costa; CCFS, Coyote Creek Field Station; Co., County; COL, Colusa; CSCBC, Crystal Springs CBC; DN, Del Norte; EBB, East Bay Birds listserv; GGP, Golden Gate Park; Hwy, Highway; HUM, Humboldt; L, Lake; LAK, Lake; MBRBA, Monterey Bay Rare Bird Alert; MFN, Mendocino; MRN, Marin; MTY, Monterey; n./s./e./w. = north/south/east/west; NBB, North Bay Birds listserv; NWCBA, Northwest California Rare Bird Alert; PLA, Placer; PLU, Plumas; PNRS, Pt. Reyes National Seashore; R., River; Rd, Road; Res., Reservoir; SAC, Sacramento; SB, State Beach; SBT, San Benito; SCL, Santa Clara; SCZ, Santa Cruz; SF, San Francisco; SHA, Shasta; SJ, San Joaquin; SM, San Mateo; SOL, Solano; SP, State Park; St, Street; STA, Stanislaus; STE, State Forest; SUT, Sutter; YOL, Yolo; YUB, Yuba.

Rock, PRNS, MRN, Dec. 15 (LB) became 2 on Dec. 16 (SB). Single Long-tailed Ducks occurred at the Lodi Sewage Ponds, SJ, Nov. 30-Dec. 25 (CP; mob), Pescadero Marsh, SM, Nov. 30 (NW, DB), and Crescent City, DN, Dec. 3 (AB); 3 were at the Petaluma R. mouth, SON, Dec. 11 (DA), with 1 remaining Dec. 27 (TEL). Fourteen Barrow's Goldeneyes were

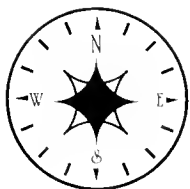
seen in 8 locations across 6 counties, while ~54 were noted at Kutrass L., SHA, Dec. 25 (LS). Eight counties hosted 57 Hooded Mergansers at 16 locations.

Raptors to Alcids

Bald Eagles saw 22 reports from 15 counties. Three Swainson's Hawks were seen Dec. 7 at the Palm Tract in

eastern CC; one was a light morph, the first such seen wintering at this site (SG). Ferruginous Hawks numbered 29 from 9 counties, and Rough-legged Hawks, 9 from 5 counties. On Dec. 1 a first-year gray-morph **Gyr Falcon** (*Falco rusticolus*) was seen

Continues on page 8



Field Trips Calendar

Saturday, February 2, AQUATIC PARK, San Francisco.

Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the foot of the Hyde Street Pier (Hyde & Jefferson) for this beginners bird walk. San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park Ranger Carol Kiser will lead this approximately two hour walk. Dress in layers. This trip is wheelchair accessible. (415) 561-7100 or 561-7104

Saturday, February 2, GRIZZLY ISLAND AND BEYOND, Solano County.

We will meet at 8:30 a.m. in the parking lot near the McDonald's Restaurant at Sunset and Hwy 12, North of the turnoff to Grizzly Island Road. There we will consolidate cars. Our plans are to bird Hill Slough, Rush Ranch, Grizzly Island and Hwy 113 corridor. Since there are muddy roads, your leader cannot promise exactly where we will bird. Please bring binoculars, scopes, layered clothing, a lunch and sweets to share (if you want to see some interesting views of wild life in the afternoon). If we are lucky, we will see most of the marsh birds, waterfowl and raptors. There may be a chance to see Tule Elk, River Otters, hear Black Rails, see Suisun Song Sparrow, Rough-Legged Hawk, Ferruginous Hawk and 3 species of owls. Trip will end by mid-afternoon. Heavy rain cancels. Leader: Robin Leong (707) 643-1287

Sunday, February 3, PANOCHÉ VALLEY.

NOTE: NEW STARTING POINT THIS YEAR. Meet at 8 a.m. at the intersection of Interstate 5 and Little Panoche Rd. about 24 miles south of Los Banos. We will work our way into the valley, then end the trip in Paicines about 4 p.m. [Paicines is about 12.5 miles south of Hollister.] We'll look for Mountain Bluebird, Lewis' Woodpecker, Phainopepla,

Vesper Sparrow, Mountain Plover. This trip traverses raptor habitat which usually produces Golden Eagle, Merlin, and Prairie Falcon. There is no gas at the intersection of I-5 and Panoche Rd., so you will need to fill up your tank on I-5 near Los Banos. Carpool from the Bay Area, if possible. Bring lunch and drinks with you. Dress warmly. Trip will end about 3 p.m. Rain cancels. Leader: Chris Carpenter (510) 569-9281 day, (510) 547-2201 eve.

Sunday, February 3, STRYBING ARBORETUM.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the front gate of the Arboretum (9th Ave. and Lincoln Way) for this regular first Sunday of the month half-day trip. The Strybing Arboretum is a delightful section of Golden Gate Park, with several "micro-habitats" attracting a varied array of resident, migrant and vagrant birds. Beginners and all others welcome. Leaders: Allan Ridley and Helen McKenna (415) 566-3241.

Wednesday, February 13, MINI-TRIP TO COYOTE HILLS REGIONAL PARK.

Meet at 9:30 a.m. in the parking lot by the Visitors' Center at the end of the road. From the East Bay take I-880 south to Newark and turn right at Rt. 84/Dumbarton Bridge exit. Continue west and exit on Paseo Padre Pkwy. Turn right and continue north one mile and turn left on Patterson Ranch Rd. and follow the signs to Coyote Hills. We will be looking for three species of teal and other wintering waterfowl. Bring lunch and a scope if you have one. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510) 351-9301 & Jean-Marie Spoelman.

Saturday, February 23, BERKELEY MEADOWS.

For this half day trip, meet at 8:30 a.m. at Marina Boulevard, just north of the intersection of Marina Blvd. and University. From the north, take the University exit from Hwy 80 and

after the loop, turn left onto University, towards the Bay. From the South, there is a University exit but you cannot turn left onto University to go towards the Bay. You must turn right and turn around. A map is recommended for those not familiar with the area. We will explore this wild area of the new East Shore State Park, currently in its planning stage. We hope to see raptors and many sparrows. If time permits, we will bird the Marina area. Boots recommended. Leaders: Lillian Fujii and Steve Hayashi (510) 236-4167.

Saturday, February 23, ARROWHEAD MARSH, Alameda County.

Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the fishing pier at the end of the road. Take Hwy 880 [Nimitz] to the Hegenberger Rd. exit. Drive west to Doolittle Drive and turn right. Turn right at the first traffic signal onto Swan Way. Turn left after a block and take the dirt road to the parking lot at the end. Possible on this trip: thousands of shorebirds and ducks, raptors, Clapper Rail and more. Bring scope if you have one. Beginners and all levels of birders welcome. Heavy rain cancels. Be prepared to saunter at least 1.5 miles. Trip expected to end by 1:30. Leader: Courtenay Peddle [510] 532-8911 [do not call after 8 p.m.] capeddle@there.net.

Sunday, March 3, STRYBING ARBORETUM.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the front gate of the Arboretum (9th Ave. and Lincoln Way) for this regular first Sunday of the month half-day trip. The Strybing Arboretum is a delightful section of Golden Gate Park, with several "micro-habitats" attracting a varied array of resident, migrant and vagrant birds. Beginners and all others welcome. Leaders: Allan Ridley and Helen McKenna (415) 566-3241.

Wednesday, March 13, MINI- TRIP TO MITCHELL CANYON,

Contra Costa County.

Meet at 9:30 a.m. Take Hwy 24 through the Caldecott Tunnel. In Walnut Creek, take Ygnacio Valley Rd. exit. Go approximately 8 miles, then turn right onto Clayton Rd. After 1 mile turn right on Mitchell Canyon Rd. and continue to the parking lot at the end of the road. [Parking outside entrance will avoid fee.] This is a delightful area with many songbirds and easy streamside walking. Be prepared for mud and bring your lunch. Rain cancels. Leaders: Anna Wilcox [510] 351-9301 and Jean-Marie Spoelman. [\$]

Thursday–Sunday, April 25–28, OHLONE WILDERNESS BACKPACK TRIP

This is a very strenuous 20 mile hike over 4 days and 3 campsites. We will begin at Sunol Regional Wilderness, alt. 300' and end at Del Valle Regional Park in Livermore, alt. 750', attaining a max. alt. of 3817' at Rose Peak. Great views, wild flowers, and birds. The first morning will be spent birding along Alameda Creek and the Little Yosemite area, looking for Acorn Woodpeckers, Black Phoebes and Yellow-billed Magpies before heading up to our first campsite. Our last campsite overlooks Del Valle reservoir, and we will have an after-dinner birding hike along the ridge. The

final morning we will look for Wild Turkeys near the reservoir. There is water at each established campsite, but it must be filtered. Pack light, but be prepared for cool evenings and warm days, poison oak and rattlesnakes. Participants are responsible for their own food and gear. Some cars will need to be ferried to Del Valle and we will carpool back to Ohlone. Reservations necessary, maximum of 12 people. There is a fee for camping and a fee for the Ohlone Wilderness Regional Trail Permit. Leader: Kathy Jarrett [510] 547-1233 kathy_jarrett@yahoo.com

Alameda Creek/Coyote Hills/Quarry Lakes Bicycle Trip, Sunday, March 10.

approximately 20 miles total, all on bike trail, very little uphill. Meet at 10:15 at the Isherwood Staging Area. We will bike along the Alameda Creek Regional Trail to Coyote Hills Regional Park, then back up the trail to Quarry Lakes Regional Park, only recently opened to the public and which is adjacent to the Isherwood Staging Area. Raptors, ducks, shore birds. Directions: By car, take I-880 to Fremont and exit onto Fremont Blvd/East. About 0.5 mi east of the freeway, turn left onto Paseo Padre Parkway, which crosses Decoto Rd in about 1 mi. Just after crossing Decoto

Rd, Paseo Padre parallels Alameda Creek; 0.8 mi after Decoto Rd, turn left onto Isherwood Dr, crossing the creek, and then immediately right into the Isherwood Staging Area. Using BART, exit at Union City Station, and go 1.5 south on Decoto Rd to the Alameda Creek Trail, then left/east along the trail 0.8 mi to the Isherwood Staging Area, which is on the north side of Alameda Creek and on the east side of Isherwood Way. The trail on the north side of the creek is unpaved, and the trail on the south side is paved; if you use the south side, exit the trail on the west side of the Isherwood bridge and then cross Isherwood and the bridge before turning right into the staging area. Dress for cool, windy weather. Bicycle helmet obligatory. Bring lunch and liquids. Optional Afghan – dinner at Salang Pass Restaurant, 37462 Fremont Blvd, after trip. Please RSVP if you want to go to dinner. Trip Leader: Kathy Jarrett, 510-547-1233, kathy_jarrett@yahoo.com

Trips marked with a (\$) go to parks or other sites which require an entrance fee. Carpooling arrangements will be attempted by leader for trips marked with a (*).

Problems, etc.: If you need information and have difficulty reaching a field trip leader, or IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO LEAD A TRIP, call Susan Groves, Field Trips Committee Chair, (510) 654-5954.

Help Keep GGAS Going

By Arthur Feinstein

I am constantly amazed by how active we are at Golden Gate Audubon. Restoring wetlands at Clinton Basin in Oakland, bringing back the Quail in San Francisco, fighting to preserve the irreplaceable, biologically rich Gateway Valley in Orinda, working to make sure the new East Shore State Park preserves and enhances wildlife habitat are just some of the things we are presently undertaking.

Our education programs in Oakland, Alameda and San Francisco address on a long-term basis our

Audubon goal of preserving our natural world. If today's kids understand the wonders of nature they will be supporters of preserving it in the future.

All of these efforts take huge amounts of staff and volunteer time and ultimately they all cost money. You can help us in our efforts by volunteering, by writing letters to policy makers when we ask you to and through your financial support.

To help ensure that we have sufficient financial resources in the future to continue our good work, please consider placing a charitable bequest to the Golden Gate Audubon Society in your will or living trust. There are significant tax advantages that may be available by making a bequest to

a non-profit organization such as Golden Gate Audubon.

The following is suggested wording for making such a bequest. Please feel free to share this information with your estate advisor.

"I hereby give and bequeath to the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc., in Berkeley, California, the amount of

(state dollar amount of gift or percent of estate)

to be used exclusively to fund the general and unrestricted conservation purposes of the Golden Gate Audubon Society. Golden Gate

Continues on page 11

Birding on the Web – Birding Hotspots Around the World – (www.camacdonald.com/birding/)

Birders who frequent the Internet looking for information on birding spots and sites know there is an abundance of such sites. I recently came upon an excellent site, which you may want to check out and bookmark, if you are not already familiar with it.

This particular site, **Birding Hotspots Around the World**, was created by Tina McDonald, a novice Canadian birder and, as I think you will agree, a Web master extraordinaire. Her site is the culmination of the hours of work she spent doing Internet searches to find out about birding locations in specific places. For complete information on the development of this Web site, go to the **About This Site** tab on the site's home page.

In essence "this Web site contains information on birding in 200

countries, 10 provinces and 3 territories of Canada, and all 50 US states plus Washington, DC. More than 200 photographers and organizations have provided permission to showcase their work on this site. The site contains images of over 1,960 bird species. According the Xenu Link Checker, there are 9,136 links on this site. About 2,200 birders per day are visiting the site, accessing over 130,000 pages per month. A total of over 245,000 unique visitors from more than 105 countries have visited this site." All, I think you will agree, is quite remarkable.

Selected as the **Hot Site of the Month** in the January 1999 issue of **Wildbird** the reviewer noted, "Tina has taken on the daunting job of providing information about nearly every birding hotspot in the world on her site,

and believe it or not, she pulls it off...As if all this wasn't enough, Tina offers users another bonus: When you see a photograph of a bird on the site you can't identify, simply pause your cursor on the photo and the species name appears at the bottom of your screen."

"A typical page contains links to birding spots, a country checklist and maps, information on endemic and endangered birds, links to rare bird information and local events and festivals, and information tours/guides and accommodations."

So, don't wait. Log on now and explore the many wonderful, informative features of this Web site.

Editor's Note: If you have a favorite Web site you would like to share with GULL readers please email your review to me at peter_caldwell@attglobal.net.

Observations...

Continued from page 5

and photographed along Flannery Road near Hwy 113, SOL (SA, SRu). The bird was reportedly seen again on Dec. 5, 6, and 7 (TB, DF, fide RL), although most observers chasing it came up with "only" the other four falcon species. Out-of-place Prairie Falcons included singles Dec. 2 along Bay Hill Rd, SON (RLb); Dec. 16-27 at Palo Alto Baylands, SCL (AJ, KC); Dec. 18 at Hayward Reg. Shoreline, ALA (EBB); and Dec. 19 at Isabel Valley, SCL (MR, MM).

The **Demoiselle Crane** (*Grus virgo*) first found Oct. 5 was seen along Woodbridge Rd, SJ, Nov. 28 (HM), but no further reports regarding this bird were posted during the period. The CBRC will rule in the future on whether this Asian species shall be considered a wild bird.

Three Pacific Golden-Plovers

and a likely American Golden-Plover were observed n. of Pigeon Point, SM, Dec. 17 (JW). Forty-two Snowy Plovers in Half Moon Bay, SM (CSCBC), and over 500 Semipalmated Plovers at the Alviso salt ponds, SCL (MR, JM, MMe), both Dec. 15, were impressive numbers. Mountain Plover reports included 61 near County Line Rd, COL, Nov. 30 (TE); up to 60 near Turlock L., STA, Dec. 2-9 (RLa, MF, DFr); 50 in n. YOL, Dec. 4-6 (MB); and a maximum count of 516 in the Robinson Rd area, SOL, Dec. 11 (JK).

Numbers of Black Oystercatchers inside San Francisco Bay seem to be increasing, with reports from several localities this period. Up to 4 Lesser Yellowlegs occurred in Alviso, SCL, Dec. 10-24 (MR, MM, JM, MMe), 1 was at Palo Alto Baylands, SCL, Dec. 18 (MN, JM, MMe); and 1 was in Menlo Park, SM, Dec. 16 (AE). A juvenile Sharp-tailed Sandpiper was reported Dec.

16 at New Chicago Marsh in Alviso, SCL (MM). Over the next several days (through at least the 27th) the bird was seen by some observers but frustrated others as it stayed hidden in pickleweed. Rock Sandpipers occurred in several locations: up to 4 at MacKerricher SP, MEN, throughout the month (DT, BL); 1 on the Moss Landing, MTY, jetty, Nov. 29-30 (LG; BM); 1 on Bodega Bay's south jetty, SON, Dec. 2 (RLb); and up to 5 on the north jetty, HUM, Dec. 8 and 24 (PSP, MW). Wintering Ruffs were noted throughout the period at Bodega Bay, SON, (RLb, RS, MP) and New Chicago Marsh, Alviso, SCL (MR, MM, BR, AE). A Red-necked Phalarope was seen Dec. 16 on the Hayward CBC, ALA.

Jaeger sightings included 1 Pomarine Dec. 15 from the Mad River Boat Ramp, HUM (Arcata CBC), 5 Pomarines on the Monterey Bay CBC Dec. 17, and 1 Pomarine

and 2 Parasitics Dec. 2 from MacKerricher SP, MEN (MMa). On Dec. 21, an immature Laughing Gull was found at Kutras L., SHIA (JB). Seen by others the next 2 days, this is a 1st county record. A Mew Gull showed up at Ellis L., YUB, Dec. 16, for a 1st county record (TM), and 2 were at the Nimbus Fish Hatchery, SAC, Dec. 12, along with several Glaucous-winged Gulls (SAB). At L. Cunningham, SCL, the **Lesser Black-backed Gull** (*Larus fuscus*) returned Dec. 16 for yet another winter (MM; mob). In a belated report, a 1st-winter Western Gull visited the Redding Sewage Ponds, SHA, Nov. 15 (TMC, RH). Glaucous Gull reports included singles near Tindall Landing, YOL, Nov. 30 (TE); at the B-and-J Sanitary Landfill, SOL, Dec. 11 (JK); at Capitola, SCZ, Dec. 14-19 (DS); at Hayward Reg. Shoreline, ALA, Dec. 16 (CBC); and up to 4 birds in SM Dec. 15 (CSCBC). One or two Caspian Terns were noted in Arcata, HUM, on Dec. 7 and 10 (GL, JT). Three Elegant Terns flew past the Santa Cruz coast on Dec. 15 (CK), and 2 were off Seacliff SB, SCZ, Dec. 26 (DS). The Charleston Slough, SCL, Black Skimmers topped out at 22 birds Dec. 6 (MR). Marbled Murrelets numbered over 23 from 7 locations in 6 counties, while more than 37 Ancient Murrelets were seen from 10 sites in 7 counties.

Doves to Thrashers

A high count for Band-tailed Pigeons was 1,150 birds in 20 min. flying n. over Mt. Davidson, SF, Dec. 19 (PS). On Dec. 15, a Long-eared Owl called at Glen Haven Rd, SCZ, (DS). A Short-eared Owl was at Guintoli Rd, Arcata, HUM, Dec. 5 (CO) and 3 were at Arcata Marsh, HUM, Dec. 7 (JT). A pleasant surprise in a birder's backyard was a Northern Saw-whet Owl calling Dec. 15 near Skyline Blvd. in nw SCL (LCh).

An unusual winter (or very late migration?) find in the Central Valley was a Vaux's Swift discovered Dec. 5 at the Nimbus Fish Hatchery, SAC (TE). Early nest-building and incubation in Anna's Hummingbirds was observed Dec. 26 in SCL (MM) and Dec. 27 in GGP, SF (KM, JW, SM, JH).

A Costa's Hummingbird surprised birders who visited a Santa Cruz yard Dec. 18 to observe a Black-throated Blue Warbler being seen there (DR, RC). This hummer has likely been present for some time (MS). Two *Selasphorus* hummingbirds were seen, one in a Ferndale, HUM, yard Dec. 4 (TMC) and one at Mt. Davidson, SF, Dec. 19 (PS).

Lewis's Woodpeckers appeared at Pt. Reyes Station, Dec. 15-21 (DW; mob), and w. of Chualar, MTY, Dec. 17 (SR), with 10 reported from along Acampo and Cord Rds, SJ, Dec. 16 (LW), and up to 24 at Orick, HUM (RHe, MMo). An observer along the Mt. Hamilton Rd, SCL, Dec. 3, witnessed 2 Acorn Woodpeckers behaving like African oxpeckers – perching on the backs of 2 pigs, which intermittently flopped onto their sides and let the birds pace to and fro along their flanks. The woodpeckers would occasionally forage on the ground for food the pigs had turned up in the soil (GSC). Immature Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers turned up at the Santa Clara Valley Water District Pond, SCL, Dec. 3-11 (AV; mob) and at Caledonia Park, Pacific Grove, MTY, Dec. 8-19 (SR; mob), while one in Pescadero, SM, seen last month was refound Dec. 23 (RSTh). An adult bird along Pilarcitos Creek, SM, Dec. 15 was likely a Yellow-bellied, but Red-naped could not be ruled out (AE). Two Red-naped Sapsuckers were found Dec. 15 in SCZ, one at Mission Springs near Scotts Valley (BS) and one off Empire Grade (EF), reseen Dec. 19 (oob). A Red-naped x Red-breasted Sapsucker hybrid was noted Dec. 27 in the Presidio, SF (RS, JC). A southerly Pileated Woodpecker was seen Dec. 7 at Monte Bello Open Space Preserve, SCL (MR).

"Western" Flycatchers were seen (but alas, not heard) in Foster City at Kildare Park Dec. 15 (CSCBC) and at Inverness, MRN, Dec. 20 (RS). On Dec. 16, a **Dusky-capped Flycatcher** (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*) was found at L. Merritt, ALA, for a 1st county record (JL). The bird was viewed thereafter by many observers through at least Dec. 24. Across the Bay, the Tropical

Kingbird of GGP's Buffalo Paddock, SF, was present throughout the period (HC, oob). A Cassin's Kingbird was seen along Panoche Rd, SBT, Dec. 18 (ME, SD, EP).

Single Cassin's Vireos were found Dec. 10 in the Presidio, SF (JC), and Dec. 16 at Caledonia Park, Pacific Grove, MTY (JW, DP). Tree and Violet-green Swallows were each noted in 8 locations in 5 counties, but the prize goes to Barn Swallows. Winter records are rare, yet during this period at least 40 Barn Swallows were recorded from 12 sites in 8 counties (ALA, CC, DN, HUM, MTY, SCL, SF, SM), with a high count of 11 at Hauser Marsh, Arcata, Dec. 15 (JT). This species normally winters from Mexico south through Central and South America.

Not many California birders would run out to chase an Oak Titmouse, but San Francisco's listing set did when the city's first in 8 years showed up at Candlestick Park Dec. 10-13 (AD). The city also saw a mild influx of other oak-associated species this fall. Single Rock Wrens appeared at quarry sites near the coast in SCZ Dec. 15 (DS) and Pacifica, SM, Dec. 19 (JL). Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were seen at L. Merced, SF, Dec. 7 (ME); Laguna Grande Park, Seaside, MTY, Dec. 8 (AC); San Pedro County Park, Pacifica, SM, Dec. 15 (CBC); and CCFS, SCL, Dec. 16 (VSY). Townsend's Solitaires were found Dec. 8 in the mountains n. of L. Pillsbury (1 each in LAK and MEN; MMa), Dec. 16 on the Contra Costa Co. CBC, and Dec. 14, oddly, in a bank parking lot in Lockeford, SJ (DY; KMi). In the Santa Cruz Mountains, SCZ, 2 were seen Dec. 15 at Castle Rock SP (BM, JP), and singles Dec. 15 at Mount Hermon, SCZ (CE) and Dec. 19 at Soquel Demonstration StF, SCZ (DS). A Sage Thrasher was found in Montara, SM, Dec. 16 (AJ); it lingered to eat berries from a roadside bush, cooperatively showing itself to observers through at least the 24th.

Wood Warblers to Finches

Continues on page 11

Donations

The response to our recent fundraising appeal has been remarkable, in fact quite astounding. To those of you who have responded we want to thank you for your generosity and kindness. For those of you who have not yet responded please make every effort to make your contribution now...GGAS is counting on **YOU**.

Thank you all for your ongoing support of Golden Gate Audubon.
You make it all happen!

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In Memorium

Helen Green, in memory of her husband, **Paul D. Green**. Joyce and Robert Johnson in memory of **Clifford Sojourner**. Renee and

Steve Margolin in memory of Paul D. Green. Harold Rosegay in memory of **Mary Louise Rosegay**

A bequest to the Golden Gate Audubon Society helps make it possible for us to continue the

good work we do in helping to preserve our natural world for future generations. If you are interested in setting up a bequest we have a team of experts who will be glad to help you. Please call Arthur Feinstein at our GGAS Office for more information. Our phone number is 510-843-2222. Thanks.

Observations...

Continued from page 9

Wood warblers made a good showing during the period. In addition to those shown in the chart, 4 Wilson's, 5 Hermit, 14 Yellow, and 5 Black-throated Gray Warblers were reported.

Summer Tanagers appeared in 5 counties: Nov. 29-Dec. 6 at North L., GGP, SF (HC; mob); Dec. 6 near De Laveaga Park, Santa Cruz (TH, RD); Dec. 8 (2 birds) and 11 at Laguna Grande Park, Seaside, MTY (NMc, BE); on Santa Ynez St in San Bruno, SM, Dec. 16 (RSTh); in Olema, MRN, Dec. 21-22 (DM); and at New Brighton SB, SCZ, through Dec. 27 (RCO, DS). A **Scarlet Tanager** (*Piranga olivacea*) was seen Dec. 7-11 in a Santa Cruz yard (KA). Single Western Tanagers turned up Dec. 9 at L. Merced, SF (SD); Dec. 15 at Natural Bridges SB, SCZ (SGe); and Dec. 16 along the Guadalupe River at Trimble, SCL (San Jose CBC). Two were near the San Lorenzo River in Santa Cruz Dec. 15 (AK).

On Coyote Creek north of Tasman, SCL, a Green-tailed Towhee was discovered Dec. 21-23 (SH, GBa; MM & oob), presumably the same individual that has wintered here previously. Six Chipping Sparrows were noted on the Dec. 16 Contra Costa Co. CBC, and in Muir Beach, MRN, a Clay-colored Sparrow visited a feeder Nov. 30 (JiWh). A Grasshopper Sparrow

showed itself Dec. 12 at Wilder Ranch SP, SCZ (RD, TH), and 3 were tallied here by CBC counters Dec. 15 (RW). In Bayside, n. of the Jacoby Creek mouth, HUM, a Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow was seen Dec. 15-16 (JPo; JHu). An eastern "Red" Fox Sparrow returned Dec. 14 to winter again in a San Jose yard (BBa) while 2 "Slate-colored" Fox Sparrows were at an Arcata yard Dec. 21 (MMr). Eighteen Swamp Sparrows were recorded at 11 sites in 6 counties. White-throated Sparrows numbered 41 birds from 35 sites across 12 counties, but these reports were outdone by the whopping total of 44 White-throats on the Arcata CBC (including 10 at one feeder). This species appears to be increasing in the area (NWCRBA). Three Harris's Sparrows were reported from n. California feeders: 1 south of Talmage, MEN (CH, GH), 1 in Alameda Co. (Hayward CBC), and the individual that wintered last year in Millbrae, SM (CSCBC). A Lapland Longspur was detected along Pleasant Grove Road, SUT, and 2-3 more on Brewer Rd, PLA, Nov. 30 (TE, BWe, SAb, JLe). Near the intersection of Hwy 113 and Subaco Rd, SUT, the same day, both a Lapland and a Chestnut-collared Longspur were found (TE).

One of each *Phencticus* grosbeak showed up at feeders during the period. A Rose-breasted was in Soquel, SCZ, Dec. 6-15 (GC), and a Black-headed in San Francisco Nov.

30 (AR). Single Yellow-headed Blackbirds were reported from the Alexandre Dairy near Fort Dick, DN, Dec. 3 (AB); in San Mateo, SM, Dec. 3 (RSTh); and on the Arcata CBC (NWCRBA). On Nov. 29, a female Rusty Blackbird was with Brewer's Blackbirds along Pleasant Grove Rd, SUT (TE). The bird was relocated the next day (TE, BWe, SAb, JLe). On Dec. 23, a **Common Grackle** (*Quiscalus quiscula*) was discovered in Guerneville, SON, feeding with Rock Doves and blackbirds in a Safeway parking lot (PP). Various observers viewed it through at least the 27th. Impressive numbers of Great-tailed Grackles were noted Dec. 24 in Stanislaus Co.: 35 in Ceres and over 65 at the Ceres Sewage Ponds (JG). A female of this species was in downtown Tiburon, MRN, Dec. 21-25 (GHi). Up to 3 Bullock's Orioles frequented Caledonia Park, Pacific Grove, MTY, Dec. 11-17 (BW; mob), while singles visited feeders in Santa Cruz Dec. 15 (GM) and Mendocino Co. Dec. 17-26 (FF). On Dec. 23-27, a 1st-year male Scott's Oriole nectared at aloes at the Conservatory of Flowers, GGP, SF (ASH; oob). Another Scott's Oriole was reported from the Pt. Reyes CBC Dec. 15 (GR). At the Hayward Shoreline, ALA, Dec. 4, a female Cassin's Finch was reported flying over (EBB). And at the Princeton willows, SM, a Lawrence's Goldfinch was recorded Dec. 15 (CSCBC).

Help Keep GGAS...

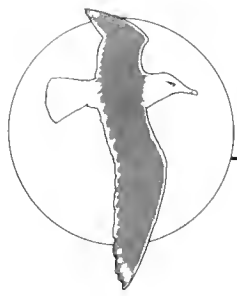
Continued from page 7

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If you have any questions or would like to discuss a possible gift

through a bequest or charitable trust, please feel free to call Executive Director Arthur Feinstein at 510-843-2222. We have a team of volunteer experts in this field who can advise you on the best course for you.

We hope this is of interest to those of our members who are contemplating the future and who hope to give our natural world a little bit of help. Thanks.



February Meetings

San Francisco February Meeting

Golden Gate Audubon Society's February San Francisco program will be a slide show presentation by David Edelstein on "Bird Singing: The Ecology of Birds' Songs and Identifying Them By Ear." If you can, please join us at the Randall Museum on Thursday, February 14, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Beginning with a basic understanding of the ecology of bird songs and calls, this slide show introduces the different kinds and patterns of bird vocalizations – songs, calls, mimicry, secondary song, sub-song, dialects, duets, etc. – and the reasons researchers believe they are used. Employing a fun and entertaining style of audience participation, Daniel allows attendants to hear typical songs as well as distinguish difficult to identify songs from sound-alike birds and groups of birds. You'll also hear about birds that attract their mates with structural sounds, in lieu of emitting songs and calls.

Daniel is a freelance naturalist and science writer who has led bird walks and taught natural history classes for the last 20 years.

East Bay February Meeting

For the February East Bay program, Ron Gaul will talk about the Sea Turtle Restoration Project. If you can, please join us at the Northbrae Community Church on Thursday, February 21, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

The Sea Turtle Restoration Project is working to protect endangered sea turtles. Some of their goals are to:

The Sea Turtle Restoration Project and the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD) filed two legal actions in 2000 to reform California's gillnet fisheries. One action was a 60-day notice against the halibut gillnets north of Pt Conception, which were killing sea otters and a sea bird, the common murre. This forced the DFG to effectively close the central coast gillnets by pushing them out to 60 fathoms in April 2001.

While some progress has been made, there is still more to be done.



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